

also ambitions of his own, and he disapproved the smaller Powers in the League to share in the control of affairs. Since the end of the war the Continent had been guided mainly by Great Britain, France and Italy. Why should Germany now be added to the firm ? And why should the four Great Powers consider in a friendly way the claims for revision which inevitably arise after a dictated peace ? It was impossible for Great Britain and France to decline, for the latter feared a *rapprochement* between Rome and Berlin if she stood aloof. The Italian draft handed to MacDonald and Sir John Simon during a visit to Rome in March in connection with the dying Disarmament Conference envisaged co-operation of the four Powers who should impose their policy on other States ; revision of treaties ; equality of military rights for Germany if the Disarmament Conference broke down ; and colonial readjustments in favour of Italy and Germany.

The Foreign Secretary told his host that some amendments were desirable, among them a recognition of the sanctity of treaties, -and indeed the scheme was full of explosive matter. The spectre of revision alarmed not merely France, who pressed for modifications,- but Poland, who angrily resented her exclusion from the negotiations, and the Little Entente. So shrill were the protests of Beneš and Titulescu that revision dropped out of the programme. The anaemic Four Power Pact for ten years was initialled in Rome on June 7, 1933. In a covering despatch Sir John Simon explained that it was not to be regarded as a substitute for or as set in opposition to the Covenant, nor as an attempt to impose the will of the four signatories on other states. The new machinery was to operate within the ambit of the Covenant and did not imply any extension of our obligations. The pact was

never ratified
and was forgotten as quickly as made. Two of its
signatories
were shortly to show how little they were
inclined to consult
their partners when far-reaching decisions were
to be framed.
Yet it was not without importance. It marked a
further step
towards Germany's recovery of status, loosened
the ties
between Paris and Warsaw, emphasized afresh the
difficulty of
territorial revision, and wounded its author's
pride. Small
concessions, it was clear, would be useless, and
substantial
sacrifices nobody was prepared to make. The
problem of
peaceful change seemed insoluble.